

# Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated.*

March 1991

## EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting	March 1	Annual General Meeting -
		Members Night
Meeting	April 5	Nocturnal Friends -
		Mr R. Watkins
Excursion	March 3	Evansford Reservoir
Excursion	April 7	



President: Mr K Hammond Ph.053 394534  
 Vice Pres: Miss H Burgess 312210  
 Secretary: Mr J Gregurke 394993  
 Treasurer: Mrs F Williamson 327631  
 Editor: Mr L Fink 052 861319

Meetings as specified are held at the School  
 of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth.,  
 Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m.  
 EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE  
 FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARM-  
 STRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for  
 FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for  
 HALF DAY\*

VALE - Tony Barlow.

The death of Tony Barlow on Friday, February 8, has sadly deprived us of a most enthusiastic member.

Since joining the Club Tony has contributed wholeheartedly to many facets of it's program, as he has done in his involvement with other organisations which spanned his varied interests,

Always a keen scholar, Tony sought understanding of the natural environment, particularly bird life, and translated this into a series of Natural History Crossword puzzles publicised in the FNCB. News Sheet from early 1988. He also served as Editor of the News Sheet between May 1988 and March 1990.

Tony especially enjoyed 'Campout' functions with the campfire yarns and songs at the end of the day. His renditions of comic songs and ballads were quite memorable!

His cheery disposition and ready sense of humour will surely be missed.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Avis and her family at this time.

G.W.B.



#### Answers to Question Time

1. Fully webbed feet
2. Daylight
3. (a) SIRENIA (b) They thought to be Mermaids
4. Egrets
5. Gliders
6. MONOTREMES
7. They are Marsupials
8. Ostrches
9. (a) They build a bower or display centre (b) To attract Females
10. Flying Ducks.



### Field Reports: December Meeting

- Harvey Hooper - Black-shouldered Kite raised one young at Brown Hill. Also sighted Kangaroo and Koala.
- Ken McDonnell - Little Bittern seen at Lake Wendouree one evening in January. Long-necked tortoise in dam at Invermay. White's Thrush at Invermay.
- Greg Binns - Australian Hobby on TV antennae in Pleasant Street.
- Kit Williamson - Magpies nested at Ballarat Grammar School.
- Ken Hammond - Most Lorikeets have left Wendouree.
- Helen Young-Harvey - Lorikeets seen once in fruit trees.
- Greg Binns - Merrin-merrin swamp dry and Middle swamp has little water. Pair of Brolgas with one large juvenile.
- John Mildren - White's Thrush and Brush Cuckoo seen at Mt Helen.
- John Cookson - Goldfinch feeding on dandelion seeds.
- Pat Murphy - Acacia mucronata (Narrow-leaf Wattle) found south of Ballarat. This is a new species for the Ballarat Study Area.
- Frank Harrap - Wombat forest sightings included White's Thrush, Blue-winged Parrot and 2 pairs of Gang-gang Cockatoos which came together. Rose Robin not seen.

### Dates for Your Diary

- March 1-3 Outdoor Expo, Wendouree Secondary College.
- March 5 7.30pm at Scarsdale Hall. Information meeting about Ballarat-Skipton Railway reserve.
- March 8-11 VFNCA/WVFNCA Camp-out at Howmans Gap.
- March 15 Project Branch Field Day to look at tree planting near Cairn Curran. Meet at Carisbrook Leisure Centre 12.30pm.
- March 22 Committee Meeting, 8pm, at Dalman's, 55 Marie Crescent, Wendouree.



## ANGLESEA EXCURSION

Sunday, February 3rd, 1991

The first excursion for 1991 was to the Point Addis area just east of Anglesea. A hot, north wind was blowing when we left Ballarat but when we drove over the Barrabool hills west of Geelong we ran into a cooler, southerly ocean breeze.

We met our excursion leader, Mary White, who greeted us with gifts of her beautifully painted cards.

The cliff top at Point Addis is a harsh environment. The plants are pruned by the salt laden winds and are further damaged by the trampling of thoughtless people. Fencing has been necessary to keep people in defined areas. Unfortunately managers of these areas do not always make wise decisions. Two examples of poor planning which we were shown were a straight path going down a slope which resulted in water running down the path causing an erosion problem; and the use of pasture hay, with introduced weeds, being used to cover a bare area of ground.

We received a plant list for the cliff top area and quickly found the following plants:

<i>Spinifex sericea</i>	Hairy Spinifex
<i>Lepidosperma gladiatum</i>	Coast Sword-sedge
<i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>brevicaulis</i>	Coast Flaw-lily
<i>Acaena anserinifolia</i>	Bidgee Widgee
<i>Apium prostratum</i>	Sea Celery
<i>Brachycome parvula</i>	Coast Daisy
<i>Cassytha Melanthera</i>	Coarse Dodder-laurel
<i>Calocephalus brownii</i>	Cushion Bush
<i>Clematis microphylla</i>	Small-leaf Clematis
<i>Correa alba</i>	White Correa
<i>Comesperma polygaloides</i>	Small Milkwort
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidneyweed
<i>Disphyma crassifolium</i> ssp. <i>clavellatum</i>	Rounded Noon-flower
<i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i>	Ruby Saltbush
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Ironbark
<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Messmate Stringybark
<i>Leptospermum continentale</i>	Prickly Teatree
<i>Lasiopetalum baueri</i>	Slender Velvet-bush
<i>Leucopogon parviflorus</i>	Coast Beard-heath
<i>Melaleuca lanceolata</i>	Moonah
<i>Pimela serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme Pimelea

<i>Pomaderris oraria</i>	Coastal Pomaderris
<i>Rhagodia candoliana</i>	Sea-berry Saltbush
<i>Sarcocornia quinqueflora</i>	Bearded Glasswort
<i>Scutellaria humilis</i>	Dwarf Skullcap
<i>Swainsona lessertifolia</i>	Coast Swainsona
<i>Tetragonia impexicoma</i>	Bower Spinach
<i>Threlkedia diffusa</i>	Coast Bonefruit

The book "Coastal Vegetation of Anglesea-Airey's Inlet Region" by Mary White enables easy identification of these plants.

Mary also showed us patches of moss, which although dry at this time of the year are very important plants to prevent runoff and hold the soil. We were encouraged to taste the ripe berries of Ruby Saltbush and Coast Beard-heath.

The second area we inspected was along the beach where we saw plants such as Sea Rocket, Marram grass and Hairy Spinifex stabilising sand dunes. Coast Everlasting was just beginning to flower. We all returned to the carpark with an load of bottles and cans which were littering the beach.

After lunch we had a longer walk into the Ironbark Basin area. Most of the Ironbark forest area has little understory - possible due to the low fertility of the soil. In other places there are dense stands of Varnish Wattle which germinated following the fires of Ash Wednesday 1983. As we walked towards the sea there was a sudden transition between the ironbark community and the messmate stringybark community which gradually became shorter and merged into a heathland community. A few birds where seen around the dam in the ironbark forest. These included Common Bronzewing, Crimson Rosella, Yellow Robin, Red-browed Firetail, and New Holland, White-naped and White-eared Honeyeaters.

Thanks to Mary White for sharing her enthusiasm and knowledge and making this an interesting excursion.

## Atlas of Victoria Wildlife.

At the February meeting, Robert Humphries, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Officer, of the department of Conservation and Environment explained the development of the Atlas of Victorian Wildlife Management Branch since it's origin fifteen years ago.

This computerised data base of Flora and Fauna entries now holds more than one million records of species within Victoria. Rob emphasized the need for the contribution of observers by all Field Naturalists, of unusual and more usual sightings, so that updating of distribution data may be carried out. It was noted that our former standard classification guides are now 40-50 per cent obsolete.

Rob demonstrated, on the computer, the capabilities and information available - eg. list of species in a given area; every location of a species within an area (10' grid) or numbered grids; lists for each area in either alphabetical order or in families; distribution map for each species can also be shown and printed.

All this can be provided within a few minutes and is available to interested persons at the local office of the department of conservation and environment.

The value of the Atlas extends to provision of information to Government and private bodies who are required to do unpaid studies on land subject to change. It can also be used for management plans, school and college reports and feasibility studies.

Data cards are available, and we are all urged to make the effort of contributing from our field observations.

For technically minded people, the data base is stored on Olivetti computer and accessed via a D BASE 111+ software package.

It is accessible to users through the Departments PRIME computer system, however, prints will be posted to people requiring information.

Rob's explanation was most informative and we look forward at some future time to discuss the development of the Flora and Fauna Huarantee with him.

G.W.B

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PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE.

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### Question Time

1. Some birds are referred to as TOTIPALMATE.  
What does this mean?

2. Birds and animals referred to as DIURNAL.  
What does this word mean?

3. DUGONGS are found around the tropical coast of Australia as well as other countries.  
What order do they belong to?

Why this name?

4. An AIGRETTE is a plume of feathers.  
Which bird supplied these feathers?

5. VOLPLANING is a means of locomotion.  
Collectively what are the animals that use this method called?

6. In Australia there are three classes of mammals found naturally they are

A. ?

B. Marsupials

C. Eutherians

7. In America the family of animals called DIDELPHIS are related to what group of Australian animals?

8. (Tricky) What is the largest bird running wild in Australia

9. BOWERBIRDS are beautiful birds related to the birds of paradise.

What do they build?

What is it used for??

10. What does a CALEANA major look like?



Botanical Notes :-

Genera of the grass family ( Poaceae ,  
continued from Feb. News Sheet

<u>Genus</u>	<u>Common name</u>	<u>Usually found</u>	<u>Major plant characteristics</u>
Holcus	Yorkshire fog	Widespread in cool climates, especially in wet areas	A tufted perennial - softly hairy all over
Hordeum	Barley, Barley grasses	Barley is an impt. cereal crop. Barley grasses are widespread - annual, often in salty areas.	Annuals. Auricles prominent. Glumes and lemma have awns - often quite long
Lolium	Rye grasses	Widespread- found in most sown pastures. May also be regarded as a weed.	Glabrous annual or perennial - leaf blade flat. Inf. a spike.
Microlaena	Weeping grass	Fairly common in forests, heathlands and open plains	Slender rhizomic perennial. Glumes very small.
Paspalum	Paspalum	Valuable pasture grass in warm areas. Grows here on roadsides	Inf. appear in late summer. Tough perennial grass. Inf. a spike or raceme. Spikelets with 1 floret and almost flat.

- to be concluded

*HH*